



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

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USDA Rural Development State Director Holds Economic Development Forum

Tecumseh, Neb., March 26, 2002 – Jim Barr, USDA Rural Development State Director of Nebraska held an Economic Development Forum today at the Five Rivers RC & D in Tecumseh. State Director Barr called the forum together in an effort to heighten the awareness of economic activities that are occurring in Tecumseh and surrounding areas.

"Rural communities must take a proactive approach in preparing for growth and sustainability of their economic future," stated Barr. "Today's forum will provide an learning opportunity for all involved as open dialogue takes place regarding paths taken by communities to strengthen their economy as well as the challenges they have faced and solutions found."

A panel of near 30 individuals attended the forum with representation from local, state and federal sources of Johnson and surrounding counties. Topics of discussion included present economic development activities underway, assessment of economic practices utilized and barriers encountered in spurring economic development efforts.

USDA Rural Development serves as the lead federal entity for rural development needs and administers financial and technical assistance through three agencies: Rural Housing Service, Rural Business-Cooperative Service and Rural Utilities Service. Further information on USDA Rural Development can be obtained by contacting any USDA Service Center or by visiting USDA's website at www.rurdev.usda.gov.

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